drought situation. Further action will be taken in accordance with the procedure for assistance from the NCCF.

Mumbai-Kanyakumari dedicated high speed corridor

*236. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways propose to construct high speed passenger corridors;

(b) if so, the details of the regions that would be covered by these corridors;

(c) the details of the stations proposed to be connected in the southern region;

(d) whether there is proposal for Mumbai-Kanyakumari dedicated high speed corridor;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the time by which the work on these projects is expected to begin?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Ministry of Railways had decided only to conduct pre-feasibility studies for construction of high speed passenger corridors, one each in the Northern, Western, Southern and Eastern regions of the country. The selected corridors are as below:

(i) Delhi-Chandigarh-Amritsar

(ii) Pune-Mumbai-Ahmedabad

(iii) Hyderabad-Dornakal-Vijayawada-Chennai

(iv) Chennai-Bangalore-Coimbatore-Ernakulam

(v) Howrah-Haldia

(c) The station which would be connected by Southern corridor will be known only after completion of pre-feasibility studies and will depend on demand, financial viability and operational feasibility.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) A proposal from Chief Minister of Kerala has been received for Mumbai-Kanyakumari corridor. Ministry of Railways is undertaking a pre-feasibility study of Bangalore-Coimbatore-Ernakulam section of this corridor.

(f) Global tenders for engaging a Consultant for conducting pre-feasibility studies are under process. A decision shall be taken only after these studies are completed and evaluated.

Effective scheme to improve the condition of farmers

†*237. SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH:
SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that farmers are not getting the benefits of facilities and packages declared by Government due to which they are compelled to commit suicide owing to indebtedness;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(b) whether it is also a fact that the loans from banks for development of agriculture have decreased and maximum rural branches have been closed by the banks;

(c) whether Government is formulating any effective scheme to improve the condition of farmers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) No such report has been received by the Government. With a view to mitigating the distress of farmers, Government announced a Rehabilitation Package in 2006 for the farmers in the the identified 31 distress districts of Andhra Pradesh (16), Karnataka (6), Kerala (3) and Maharashtra (6), where maximum suicides by farmers were reported. Achievement under credit components of the rehabilitation package which aims to mitigate distress of farmers due to indebtedness is given below:

(i) The overdue loans of the farmers in these 31 districts as on 01 July 2006 has been reschedule over a period of 3-5 years with a one year moratorium.

(ii) The entire interest on overdue loans amounting to Rs. 3728.37 crore as on 01 July 2006 have been waived off in the 31 identified distressed districts. Farmers with no past interest burden as on that date became eligible for fresh loans from the banking system.

(iii) The credit flow target in 31 identified distressed districts for the year 2006-07 was fixed at Rs. 21,422.44 crore and the achievement was Rs. 19,927.42 crore. For the year 2007-08, the credit flow target has been fixed at Rs. 23,402.71 crore.

(b) No, Sir. Ground level credit disbursement by all agencies for agriculture has increased from Rs. 1,25,309 crore during 2004-05 to Rs. 1,80,486 crore during 2005-06 and further increased to Rs. 2,29,400 crore in 2006-07. Agency-wise details of achievement during the last three years are given below:

(Rs. in crore)

Agency	Amount of loans disbursed		
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Cooperative Banks	31,424	39,786	42,480
RRBs	12,404	15,223	20,435
Commercial Banks	81,481	1,25,477	1,66,485
Total	125,309	1,80,486	2,29,400

(c) and (d) A scheme of debt waiver and debt relief for farmers has been announced by the Government in the Union Budget for 2008-09. Under the Scheme, total value of overdue loans being waived is estimated at Rs.50,000 crore and the one time settlement (OTS) relief on the overdue loans is estimated at Rs. 10,000 crore.

GDP spending on medical services

†*238. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.